

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

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E.O11652: N/A

TAGS: EPAP, EAGR, CS

SUBJECT: 1976 MEAT IMPORT PROGRAM

REF: SAN JOSE 02368

1. LETTERS BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND DOMESTIC GROUPS, SIGNIFICANT CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST, AND OTHER DOMESTIC CONSIDERATIONS PRECLUDE DECREASE IN SIZE CUSHION.

2. PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT OF ONE PARTICIPANT, WHETHER WRITTEN OR ORAL, WOULD JEOPARDIZE INTEGRITY OF THIS YEAR'S PROGRAM AND MAKE FUTURE AGREEMENTS MORE DIFFICULT TO NEGOTIATE. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR COSTA RICA WOULD IMMEDIATELY POSE PROBLEM OF U.S. FAVORING COSTA RICA OVER PANAMA, WHICH HAS REQUESTED SIMILAR TREATMENT. OTHERS COULD BE EXPECTED TO FOLLOW WITH REQUESTS OF THEIR OWN.

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3. THE ESTIMATE OF 1976 IMPORTS FROM IRELAND WAS SET AT A

LEVEL EQUAL TO SHIPMENTS RECEIVED AS OF THE DATE OF
IMPOSITION OF COUNTERVAILING DUTIES, BASED ON MEAT
INSPECTION STATISTICS. THEREFORE, THE ESTIMATE FOR IRELAND
WILL CERTAINLY BE MET AND MAY BE SLIGHTLY EXCEEDED.

4. AS OF MAY 1 CANADA HAS SHIPPED 26.3 MILLION POUNDS OR
APPROXIMATELY 42 PERCENT OF OUR ESTIMATE OF ANTICIPATED
IMPORTS FROM CANADA OF 64 MILLION POUNDS. INDICATIONS
ARE THAT CANADA WILL MEET AND MAY EXCEED ITS ESTIMATE.

5. IN 1975 COSTA RICAN ALLOCATION UNDER MEAT AGREEMENT
WAS 54.2 MILLION POUNDS. SHIPMENTS OF MEAT TO U.S. BY
COSTA RICA IN 1975 TOTLED 60.5 MILLION POUNDS. WE
QUESTION IF ORAL UNDERSTANDING WITH COSTA RICA WOULD BE
SUFFICIENTLY BINDING TO LIMIT EXCESS SHIPMENTS.

6. TREATMENT OF COSTA RICA ON SAME TERMS AS CANADA IS
INCONSISTENT WITH UNDERSTANDING WRITTEN INTO AGREEMENT
PREAMBLE, WHICH STATES THAT SIMILAR AGREEMENTS ALSO WILL
BE CONCLUDED WITH OTHER COUNTRIES THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE
1975 RESTRAINT PROGRAM AND WHICH CONTINUE TO EXPORT
SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITIES OF MEAT TO THE U.S. UNQUOTE. IF
COSTA RICA WERE PERMITTED TO CHANGE STATUS FROM SIGNATORY
TO NON-SIGNATORY, ANY OTHER PROGRAM PARTICIPANT COULD ASK
FOR SIMILAR TREATMENT, AND THE SYSTEM COULD COLLAPSE.
CANADA'S UNIQUE STATUS AS NON-PARTICIPANT IS BASED ON
TRADITIONAL OPEN BORDER IN TWO-WAY MEAT TRADE AND CANADA'S
HISTORICAL REFUSAL TO CONCLUDE RESTRAINT AGREEMENT .
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